

***Remarks***

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 36-37, 40-41, 43-44, 46-49 and 58-59 are pending in the application, with claim 36 being the sole independent claim. Claims 36, 46, 47 and 59 have been amended herein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Pursuant to a phone conversation with Examiner Fronda, the Applicants understand that the Patent Office has dropped all outstanding rejections as the result of a Pre-Appeal Brief Conference. The Examiner indicated that upon entry of certain proposed amendments, the application was in condition for allowance. These amendments include the identification of the sequence "EXXR" as Seq ID No. 3 in claim 36, the deletion of the phrase "or variant" in claims 46 and 47, and changing the phrase "an amino acid sequence" to "the amino acid sequence" in claims 47 and 59. The amendments proposed by the Examiner have been made herein. The Examiner also indicated that a Substitute Sequence Listing is required to add the sequence "EXXR" as Seq ID No. 3. The required Substitute Sequence Listing has been concurrently filed.

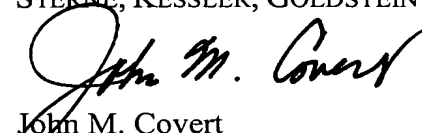
***Conclusion***

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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